



National Interagency Fire Center

3833 S. Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

June 18, 2009

To: Northern Rockies, Northwest, California, and Great Basin Coordination
Group Chairs

From: National Multi Agency Coordinating Group

Subject: Geographic Area Level Aviation Management Follow-Up

The National Multi Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) would like to express our appreciation for your participation in this meeting held in Boise, Idaho on June 10, 2009. The meeting was well attended with representation from the Geographic Area Coordination Groups, Aviation Management, and Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACC).

NMAC's expectation is that GACCs will implement protocols and processes in order to assign helicopter resources to priority missions from the Geographic Area Level of Operations. This does not include helicopters assigned to initial attack, medivac, or reconnaissance. However, it does include strategic assessment of risk in the assignment process to priority missions. An example of a strategic assessment of risk would be evaluating a proposed mission to assign a helicopter to conduct long line operations over three to five days into the future. This strategic assessment could consider validating the following:

- Has there been approval of the drop site by pilot, manager and IMT aviation or operations?
- Is there a location that has a larger area for shorter line or internal load?
- Is someone on the ground with the appropriate helitack qualifications?
- Has there been a determination of obstacle height?
- Is the pilot qualified and comfortable with the mission?

Operational risk management would assess the tactical aspects of the mission on a day to day basis and is done locally.

NMAC does not expect each Geographic Area to have an identical plan, although there should be common points. The NMAC is committed to assisting Areas and unit level agency administrators and aviation officers by providing advisors, training and participation from NMAC Liaisons during high activity periods.

As we go through this season we look to open lines of communication and dialog on this process to share ideas and strengthen partnerships toward successful implementation. We plan on discussing this in terms of lessons learned at the December NMAC – GMAC Meeting to provide insight and develop more consistency for national implementation.

Karyn Wood
Vice Chair, NMAC